(a) whether it is a fact that high powered Group of Ministers headed by Shri Pranab Mukherjee was constituted in the past and was entrusted the responsibility of making suggestions concerning fixing of sale price of gas;

(b) if so, the name of the other Ministers in this Group of Ministers; and

(c) the price at which gas was being sold by public sector oil companies and the benchmark for fixing sale price of the gas at that time?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MURLI DEORA): (a) Yes, Sir. An Empowered Group of Ministers (EGoM) was constituted in August, 2007 to examine and decide issues of gas pricing and commercial utilization of gas under New Exploration Licensing Policy (NELP).

(b) The composition of EGoM included Minister of External Affairs, Minister of Power, Minister of Chemicals and Fertilizers and Minister of Steel, Minister of Finance, Minister of Law and Justice, Minister of Petroleum & Natural Gas, Minister of Corporate Affairs and Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission.

(c) In August 2007, public sector oil companies were selling Natural Gas at a price of Rupees 3200 / MSCM (thousand standard cubic metres) or US $1.89/mmbtu (exchange rate taken is US $ 1 = Rs 48) from the fields given to them on nomination basis by the Government to "Administered Price Mechanism" (APM) customers in power and fertilizers sectors. Further, natural gas was being sold to other APM customers, *viz.*, small scale customers (consuming upto 50,000 standard cubic meters per day) and court-mandated customers, *viz.*, Taj Trapazium Zone and City Gas Distribution (CGD) projects at Rs 3840/MSCM (US $2.27/mmbtu). The issue of price determination for Natural Gas produced from these fields, called APM) Natural Gas, was referred to the Tariff Commission. Gas produced by Public Sector Oil Companies was sold to non APM customers at US$ 4.75/mmbtu (million metric british thermal unit) in Gujarat, Maharashtra and along Hajira Vijaypur Jagdishpur (HVJ) pipeline, at Rs.3,200/MSCM (US $ 1,89/mmbtu) in North East and at US $3.86/mmbtu in the rest of the country.

As regards the gas from NELP fields, the EGoM approved the price formula. The price as per approved formula comes to US $4.2/mmbtu for crude price greater or equal to US $ 60/barrel. The price basis/formula is valid for five years from the date of commencement of supply.

Late diagnosis of Swine Flu

*80. SHRI D. RAJA:

SHRI M.P. ACHUTHAN:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a good number of the deaths have taken place due to Swine Flu in Pune and other places because of late diagnosis and lack of expertise in dealing with multiple medical conditions;

(b) if so, the details thereof and Government's reaction thereto; and

(c) what steps are proposed to be taken to increase the availability, of enough Infectious Diseases (ID) specialists in the country?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD): (a) and (b) A total of 537 deaths have been reported due to Influenza A H1N1 (Swine Flu) of which 214 deaths are from Maharashtra. Deaths were due to late arrival of patients to the treatment centres and had other co-morbid conditions. Mean interval between onset of symptoms and admission to the health facility is about 5.3 days.

Central Rapid Response teams assist the States of Delhi, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra and Karnataka to contain/ mitigate the pandemic. Guidelines have been issued for mitigating the pandemic by providing access to patients with influenza like illness to dedicated screening centres, categorizing them for home care or hospital care depending upon the risk and severity and providing, treatment without testing. These are also available at our website http://mohfw-hlnl.nic.in. For those hospitalized patients who require testing, 41 laboratories have been identified to test the clinical samples. All States have been requested to gear up the State machinery and strengthen isolation facilities including critical care facilities at district level. States have been given adequate stock of Oseltamivir the drug to treat influenza A H1N1 (Swine Flu). Restricted Sale has also been allowed through private chemists.

Public awareness is created through print and visual media campaign on prevention and for seeking treatment at designated screening centres and hospitals.

(c) Public Health Foundation of India has been established to address the limited institutional capacity in India for public health including infectious diseases. It has established 4 new institutions of public health and is assisting the growth of existing public health training institutions and departments. Mandate of addressing the capacity development is also taken up by premier institutions such as National Centre for Disease Control, Delhi, Sree Chitra TirunalInstitute of Medical Sciences, Trivandrum and National Institute of Epidemiology, Chennai.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO UNSTARRED QUESTIONS

Aviation Training Academy in Shillong

437. SHRI NAND KUMAR SAI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether in view of the austerity drive and economic slow down in the Air India, Government proposes to set up a State-of-the-art Aviation Training Academy and a call centre for Air India in Shtllong;

(b) if so, the details thereof;